



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**  
COMMANDER NAVY RESERVE FORCES COMMAND  
1915 FORRESTAL DRIVE  
NORFOLK VA 23551-4615

IN REPLY REFER TO:

5041

N002

18 Oct 19

**SENSITIVE - FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY**

From: Commander, Navy Reserve Force  
To: Commander, Naval Air Force Reserve

Subj: NAVY HOTLINE CASE 201904573

Encl: (1) LCDR Stettner ltr of 11 Oct 19

1. On 11 October 2019, Commander, Navy Reserve Force (COMNAVRESFOR) Office of the Inspector General (IG) received a Hotline complaint (enclosure (1)), in which LCDR Matthew Stettner, USN, Fighter Squadron Composite 111 (VFC-111), alleged that CDR Edwin Dupont, USN, Commanding Officer, VFC-111, engaged in a pattern of abuse of his authority. Case number 201904573 was assigned to address LCDR Stettner's allegation.

2. COMNAVRESFOR IG determined that the allegations in enclosure (1) are not appropriate for an IG investigation and is forwarding this complaint as a matter under your cognizance. COMNAVRESFOR IG also noted that the allegations listed in enclosure (1) are related to the allegation contained in case #201904269 and should be considered for action you deem appropriate.

3. Enclosure (1) does contain the following two allegations that were not present in case #201904269: a) that CDR Dupont "fraudulently kept his Home of Record in Tennessee after Hurricane Irma in order to receive simultaneous BAH and Per Diem/lodging while on orders and physically residing in Key West with his family," and b) that CDR Dupont copied classified material on an unclassified copier. Please conduct an inquiry into these two allegations and provide an official echelon 4 written summary of results to LCDR Stettner and the report of inquiry to COMNAVRESFOR IG no later than 19 December 2019. Additionally, please provide COMNAVRESFOR IG a copy of the summary letter sent to LCDR Stettner for our records.

4. Inquiries concerning this matter may be directed to Mr. Michael A. Boughton, Investigations Program Manager. He can be reached at commercial (757) 322-5678, DSN 262-5678, or e-mail michael.boughton@navy.mil. Reference Hotline case number 201904269 in all correspondence.

## Exemption (6)

— J. G. REHAK  
By direction

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Any misuse or unauthorized disclosure may result in both civil and criminal penalties.

Enclosure (2)

11 October 2019

## MEMORANDUM

From: LCDR Matthew Stettner, USN

To: Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command Inspector General

Subj: PATTERN OF ABUSE OF AUTHORITY COMPLAINT AGAINST CDR EDWIN DUPONT

Ref: (a) SECNAVINST 5370.7C  
 (b) COMNAVAIRFORINST 4790.2C  
 (c) COMNAVAIRFORINST 4790.2A CH-1  
 (d) 10 USC § 1567  
 (e) 18 USC § 208(a)  
 (f) OPNAVINST 3750.6S

Encl: (1) Military Protective Order dated 26 Nov 2019 and letter rescinding it  
 (2) PAE Memorandum: Incident with 102 and the Commanding Officer 18 April 2019  
 (3) Implementation of the Military Protective Order (MPO) 26 November 2018  
 (4) Lunch at the Fly-Away Café to Discuss the MPO 22 February 2019  
 (5) CDR DuPont Attempted to Take a Down Aircraft Flying 19 April 2019  
 (6) Mid-Term Counseling on 22 April 2019  
 (7) CDR DuPont's Request for bids on Golf Carts for the Squadron 1 May 2019  
 (8) Savannah Cross-Country Return 6 May 2019  
 (9) Meeting Outside the PR Shop in Reference to Savannah Cross Country Return 7 May 2019  
 (10) E-Mail Sarah Sent to Michelle Fallout 23 May 2019  
 (11) Discussion in Maintenance Office Regarding the Results of the CSA Survey 31 May 2019

1. In accordance with Reference (a), and at the recommendation of the Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command (CNRFC) Inspector General (IG), Mr. Hodges, following my complaint to his office on 23 August 2019, I am filing an official follow-up complaint of a Pattern of Abuse of Authority against CDR Edwin DuPont for abusive actions - some allegedly with the approval of CAPT Vaccaro and/or the CNAFR JAG, CDR Lori Conlon - while Commanding Officer of VFC-111, creating a toxic Command Climate to the detriment of Flight Safety and leading to his violation of or encouragement of his subordinates to violate references (b), (c), (d) and (e).

2. I am submitting this follow-up complaint to my initial Abuse of Authority complaint because, except for a fleeting period (from 31 May 2019 through 7 June 2019) shortly after the results of the CSA survey were briefed to CDR DuPont, I have seen nothing to indicate that CDR DuPont has committed to refraining from abusing the authority entrusted to him by the US Navy. I further believe the support from CAPT Vaccaro of CDR DuPont's abuses of authority, combined with a complete lack of any tangible consequence for his actions - specifically the actions described in enclosures (3), (5) and (8) - has, through normalization of deviance, only further emboldened him to continue abusing his authority. I am concerned this pattern of abuse of authority will continue into CDR DuPont's next assignment with Training Airwing One (TW-1) stationed at NAS Meridian where he will be an instructor pilot responsible for molding the next generation of Naval Aviators.

3. The Memorandums for the Record found in enclosures (3) through (11) detail abuses of authority and the aftermath I have personally witnessed, experienced, attempted to stop and/or into which, during the course of my responsibilities as the Maintenance Department Head, I have made appropriate inquiries.

4. As a result of CDR DuPont, with the alleged approval of CAPT Vaccaro, directly and willfully violating references (b) and (c) by attempting to take a Z-coded (down) aircraft flying on 18 April 2019, detailed in enclosure (2) and (5), combined with other grumblings in the Ready Room about his poor airmanship and poor decision-making, both in and out of the cockpit, LCDR Reeves and I called a meeting of the Department Heads to discuss the escalating pattern of reckless and abusive behavior by CDR DuPont. With the participation of most of the Department Heads - either in person or on the phone bridge - we were all in agreement that the incident on the 18<sup>th</sup> of April was a flagrant disregard for the policies that keep Naval Aviation safe, and that incident was the line in the sand for most of us. In addition, we discussed other concerns we had observed or that had been brought to our attention by the Junior Officers.

The concerns identified by the Department Heads during that meeting:

- Incident on 18 April 2019 with Aircraft 102
- Excuses displayed during the AOM regarding that incident demonstrating an unwillingness to take responsibility for illegal actions
- That he fraudulently kept his Home of Record in Tennessee after Hurricane Irma in order to receive simultaneous BAH and Per Diem/Lodging while on orders and physically residing in Key West with his family
- The aggressive manner of instruction he provided when evaluating LT Windsor in VFC-13's 2-seat aircraft.
- Removal of CDR DuPont from the FCF syllabus due to poor airmanship.
- Violating the TSW SOP as the Commanding Officer by performing touch-and-goes with a CATM or TCTS pod and then blowing off the person, LCDR Stettner, who brought it up in the debrief by stating "that's a stupid rule, anyway."
- Copying classified material on an unclassified copier and then rudely brushing off LCDR Harding when he brought it to his attention after the brief. Subsequent failure to pro-actively report the incident to the Security Officer, LT Rademacher.
- Consistently the last person to walk and consistently making flights late for takeoff.
- Performing an unbriefed, short-field landing, blowing both main tires, and then, rather than own up to the mistake of poor planning, attempted to implement mandatory short field landing currency for the squadron.
- Asking multiple squadron members to bid on the golf cart contract despite the obvious conflict of interest.
- Asking for a re-do of the golf-cart bid after seeing the vendor submissions from the first bid so that his friend could have the opportunity to bid on the contract.
- A general defensiveness and aggression when well-meaning members of the Ready Room attempt to politely point out concerns like the above.
- An unwillingness to listen to counsel from his Executive Officer, CDR Meritt

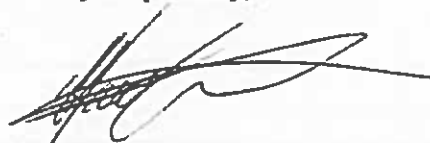
5. As the senior O4, it was left to me to bring these concerns to our supervisor, CDR Meritt. I went directly from the meeting with the O4s to CDR Meritt's office to tell him what we discussed. CDR Meritt listened attentively, and he agreed that our Command was headed down a dangerous road. He and

I devised a plan to bring CDR DuPont back into the fold using the Human Factors Council and Board outlined in reference (f). We agreed that a lot of these concerns would come out in the upcoming CSA survey. CDR Meritt and I agreed that the person CDR DuPont was most likely to listen to would be CAPT Flipse. CAPT Flipse was due to be in the squadron toward the end of the month, and he thought this should be done in person. I explained to CDR Meritt that the reason I and the other Department Heads hadn't come to him before was that he had said to more than one of us when we brought concerns about CDR DuPont to his attention, "I can't talk to him; he won't listen to me." I explained that is a very uncomfortable position for Department Heads and Junior Officers to find themselves - with a front office that won't talk and listen to one another. He agreed that isn't how it should be.

6. Shortly after the events detailed in enclosure (11), CDR DuPont began several acts of reprisal for his perception of my role as the senior Department Head in attempting to bring him back into the fold. While these acts of reprisal demonstrate a continued commitment to the pattern of abuse of authority through the end of his tour as Commanding Officer, those actions are being investigated in a separate complaint. If it is appropriate that they be included in this complaint, please refer to CNRFC IG Case Number 201903655 for the supporting evidence, or I can provide them.

7. Because some of the abuses of authority I have personally experienced and respectfully challenged were met with the phrases, "CAG knows" or "CNAFR JAG knows," as justification, I am uncertain how far up my Chain of Command approval for CDR DuPont's pattern of abuse of authority goes. As a result, my faith in the integrity and objectivity of my Chain of Command and its ability and/or willingness to take the appropriate action is sorely shaken, and I have no choice but to respectfully request the CNRFC Inspector General conduct an investigation into all abuses of authority in which CDR DuPont engaged - and the degree to which his Chain of Command approved of these actions or failed to provide proper oversight - during his tenure as the Commanding Officer of VFC-111. I am willing to provide any and all written and electronic communication I have had with these individuals. I am willing to provide affidavits for the content of any verbal communications I have had with these individuals to the best of my recollection. I am willing to provide any amplifying information that I may have concerning any aspect of anything I have reported in this request. The elements stated in this request and its enclosures are true to the best of my knowledge.

Very Respectfully,



Matthew Stettner  
LCDR USNR

Enclosure (2)

Enclosure ( )

# MILITARY PROTECTIVE ORDER

## PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

In accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-579), this notice informs you of the purpose of the form and how it will be used. Please read it carefully.

**AUTHORITY:** 5 U.S.C. 301, Departmental Regulations; 10 U.S.C. 136, Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness; and National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1995, Sec. 534.

**PRINCIPAL PURPOSE(S):** To inform the service member and the protected person that the commanding officer is issuing an order to the member prohibiting contact or communication with the protected person or members of the protected person's family or household and directing that the member take specified actions that support, or are in furtherance of, the prohibition.

**ROUTINE USE(S):** Any release of information outside of the Department of Defense shall be compatible with the purposes for which the information is being collected and shall be in accordance with an established routine use for the record system where the information is maintained.

**DISCLOSURE:** Voluntary. Failure to disclose/verify information will not delay either the issuance of the order or the enforceability of the order.

1. SERVICE MEMBER				2. PROTECTED PERSON (Important: see NOTE)			
RANK	LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	MI	RANK	LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	MI
O4	STETTNER	MATTHEW	J		WOODS	SARAH	
c. UNIT VFC-111				c. UNIT CIV			
d. INSTALLATION NAS KEY WEST, FL				d. INSTALLATION N/A			

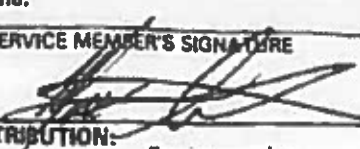
**NOTE:** Omit information in Item 2 that, if known to the service member in Item 1, could endanger the protected person.

### 3. INFORMATION SUPPORTING ISSUANCE OF THIS MILITARY PROTECTIVE ORDER

Service member has been ordered to cease contact with the protected person in this order. This order is being issued to de-escalate rising tensions and protect the service member from the involved parties.

### 4. THE PROTECTED PERSON HAS ALSO BEEN ISSUED THE FOLLOWING COURT ORDERS:

a. Civil protection order issued (Date - YYYYMMDD) _____, in _____ Court, _____ County, State of _____	
b. Order issued (Date - YYYYMMDD) _____, in _____ Court, _____ County, State of _____	Property Settlement Custody and/or Visitation

5. As a Commanding Officer with jurisdiction over the above-named service member, I find that there is sufficient reason to conclude that the issuance of an order is warranted in the best interest of good order and discipline. It is hereby ordered that (initial applicable portions):	
ERD	a. The above-named service member is restrained from initiating any contact or communication with the above-named protected person either directly or through a third party. For purposes of this order, the term "communication" includes, but is not limited to, communication in person, or through a third party, via face-to-face contact, telephone, or in writing by letter, data fax, or electronic mail. If the protected person initiates any contact with the service member, the service member must immediately notify me regarding the facts and circumstances surrounding such contact.
ERD	b. The above-named service member shall remain at all times and places at least <u>500</u> feet away from the above-named protected person and members of the protected person's family or household including, but not limited to, residences and workplaces. Members of the protected person's family or household include: -JOSH WOODS -DAUGHTER OF JOSH AND SARAH WOODS
	c. The above-named service member will vacate the military residence shared by the parties located at:
	d. Until further notified, the above-named service member will be provided temporary military quarters at:
	e. The above-named service member will attend the following counseling:
	f. The above-named service member will surrender his/her government weapons custody card at the time of issuance of this order.
	g. The above-named service member will dispose of his/her personal firearm(s) that are located or stored on the installation at the time of issuance of this order.
ERD	h. Exceptions to this order will be granted only after an advance request is made to me and approved by me.
ERD	i. Other specific provisions of this order: RESTRAINT FROM INITIATING CONTACT INCLUDES CELL PHONE, SOCIAL MEDIA, AND EMAILS.
8. DURATION: The terms of this order shall be effective until <u>1 year</u> , unless sooner rescinded, modified, or extended in writing by me. ENFORCEABILITY: Violation of this order or an applicable civilian protection order shall constitute a violation of Article 90 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice.	
a. COMMANDING OFFICER'S SIGNATURE <b>Exemption (6)</b>	
b. DATE (YYYYMMDD) 20181126	
7. I hereby acknowledge receipt of a copy of this order and attest that I understand the terms and conditions it imposes on me.	
a. SERVICE MEMBER'S SIGNATURE 	
b. DATE (YYYYMMDD) 20181126	
DISTRIBUTION: Service member Service member's local personnel file Protected person (Custodial parent of protected child)	

DD FORM 2873 (BACK), JUL 2004

Enclosure (2)

ENCLOSURE (1)

Enclosure (1)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
FIGHTER SQUADRON COMPOSITE ONE ONE ONE  
NAVAL AIR STATION KEY WEST  
KEY WEST, FL 33840-9001

IN REPLY REFER TO  
5800  
Ser N01J 075  
14 Jun 19

From: Commander Officer, Fighter Squadron Composite ONE ONE ONE  
To: LCDR Matthew J. Stettner, USN

Subj: WITHDRAWAL OF MILITARY PROTECTIVE ORDER

Encl: (1) Military Protective Order did 26 Nov 18

1. Enclosure (1) has been withdrawn and canceled.
2. The point of contact for this matter is Naval Air Station, Key West Staff Judge Advocate,  
LT John O. Wilson, JAGC, USN at commercial phone: (305) 293-2632 or email:  
[john.o.wilson1@navy.mil](mailto:john.o.wilson1@navy.mil)

  
E. R. DUPONT

Copy to:  
Ms. Sarah Woods  
NCIS

"FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY - PRIVACY ACT SENSITIVE. ANY MISUSE OR UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE OF THIS  
INFORMATION MAY RESULT IN BOTH CRIMINAL AND CIVIL PENALTIES"

Enclosure (2)

ENCLOSURE (1)

Enclosure (1)



## Memorandum

**From:** Robert B. Scott, Maintenance Manager

**Date:** 19 April 2019

**To:** LCDR Stettner, VFC-111 Maintenance Officer

**Via:** William Renfroe, Site Manager

**Subject:** Incident with 102 and the Commanding Officer 18 April 2019

During the midday recovery, 102 reported Anti-Skid failure after two consecutive aborted takeoffs for an Anti-Skid light shortly after brakes release and a downing discrepancy was initiated in OOMA. The CO was there at the time the discrepancy was initiated, and he stated he would take 102 on the afternoon event and leave Anti-Skid off. He asked if he could waive the downing discrepancy. The Maintenance Controllers explained the Anti-Skid discrepancy was a "Z" code in the MESM (COMNAVAIRFORINST 4790 2A CH-1).

I told the CO we needed to talk to the Site Manager before considering the waiver. The CO and I met with William Renfroe, and the CO said that he would talk to CAG about waiving the "Z" Coded Anti-Skid discrepancy. A short time later the CO stated he spoke with CAG and that CAG had authorized the flight. I received no written or electronic documentation of a waiver from TSW or the CO, but I have no reason to doubt the CO's word.

Maintenance Control removed the "Z" code from the Work Order, and I released the aircraft as safe for flight. The CO signed for the aircraft, manned up and taxied to the hold short, but he did not take the duty runway or take flight. He returned to the line after the remainder of his flight had taken off. Maintenance Control changed the Work Order back to a "Z" code. They also removed the "A" sheet and discarded it as no flight took place in accordance with their standard procedure.

Respectfully,  
Exemption (6)

Robert B. Scott

Enclosure (2)

ENCLOSURE(2)

Enclosure ( 1 )

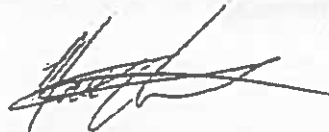


26 November 2018

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Subj: IMPLEMENTATION OF MILITARY PROTECTIVE ORDER

1. On 26 November 2018, CDR DuPont initiated a Military Protective Order against me to "protect" Sarah Woods. CDR DuPont called me into his office to tell me Josh Woods had called him, allegedly threatening to go to "the press" unless the command "did something" about my interaction with Sarah and that he could save their marriage if we could just be kept apart. I informed CDR DuPont that, at no point, had Josh relayed to me in any fashion that he would prefer I did not interact with Sarah. The last I had heard of his intention was through CDR Pearce at the conclusion of the Preliminary Inquiry that Josh requested that I stay away from his daughter, Brooke Woods, and their home, located at 1565 Buttonwood Drive, Big Pine Key, FL 33043, but that he understood that Sarah and I would interact due to the existence of our unborn child. I complied with those requests.
2. CDR DuPont said Josh was irate anyway, and that he had to "do something" to insulate the command in case Josh went to the "the press." He further explained that, based upon the advice provided to him by CDR Lori Conlon and his prior experience using a Military Protective Order to keep a "crazy person" away from LT McNally, he was going to implement a year-long Military Protective Order beginning on 26 November 2018 and ending the same date in 2019.
3. I expressed my strong objections to the MPO on the basis that it was a gross abuse of the MPO authority granted to Commanding Officers. I explained that there was no threat of violence or abuse from any of the named parties in the order, which is the only reason that authority has been granted to Commanding Officers at all, and that the time period was wildly excessive – especially since the prospective due date for my child was right in the middle of it. I recommended again, as I had after the last Preliminary Inquiry was completed, that CDR DuPont issue formal counseling or a Non-Punitive Letter of Caution, if he believed one was warranted, stating his exact expectations of me going forward.
4. CDR DuPont refused, and he insisted again that this worked in LT McNally's messy situation, it will work here and CNAFR JAG approved it. CDR DuPont presented me with the order, I signed my acknowledgement that I understood it, and he provided me with a copy. I asked him if I could explain to Sarah why I would be unable to speak with the mother of my unborn child for the next year, and he said that would be acceptable for today. I left his office.
5. The stigma of having a "protective order" placed upon me in order to "protect" the mother of my child from me is incredibly damaging to my sense of self and to my standing with any who finds out about it – because no one else knows CDR DuPont's misguided reasons for issuing it. CDR DuPont has already demonstrated by telling me about LT McNally and LT Anderson's personal situations that discretion is hardly a priority for him.
6. Because of this abuse of authority, I will be keeping records of all relevant interactions with or pertaining to CDR DuPont from this point forward.



M. J. Stettner

Enclosure (2)

ENCLOSURE (3)

Enclosure (1)

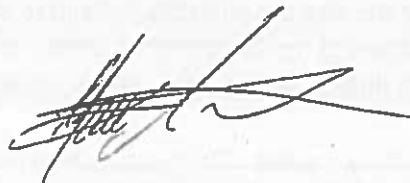
22 FEBRUARY 2019

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Subj: LUNCH AT THE FLY-AWAY CAFÉ TO DISCUSS THE MPO AND MY PERSONAL SITUATION

1. CDR DuPont and I have needed to talk about the status of my personal situation and the MPO for over a month. We found time to chat today over lunch. CDR DuPont asked me how the baby was doing and how Sarah was doing. I explained that the MPO made it difficult for me to answer those questions, that Sarah was very angry about the MPO and that it has placed an incredible strain on both of us during an already difficult time. I requested the MPO be removed and informed him that the use of the MPO for a purpose such as this is, at best, inappropriate and, at worst, an illegal abuse of authority. I explained that my son was due about a month from now, and asked if he expected the MPO to keep me away from the birth of my son. CDR DuPont did not directly answer that, but he assured me that CDR Conlon and LT Wilson had both approved this use of an MPO and that CAG knew about it. CDR DuPont continued and said that the purpose of the MPO wasn't to keep us apart or prevent us from talking about things relevant to our situation (baby, medical, divorces, etc.), it was only to insulate the Navy in the event that Josh called the press. I told CDR DuPont, that, if he wasn't going to lift the MPO, I had a solution to avoid requiring me to text him every time I ran into Sarah or she initiated contact with me. I proposed a Google Sheets spreadsheet that I would share with him via e-mail so that he could see whatever updates I made for the remainder of the MPO. CDR DuPont agreed that would be preferable, but he said he understood that we would bump into each other, and I needed to tell him if "oops, Skipper, I kissed her" happened so that he could be prepared with an answer to CAG or the Admiral.

2. CDR DuPont asked me if I planned to take Paternity Leave. I told him that I had not considered it. CDR DuPont told me "the Navy will find every way they can to fuck you; you might as well take what you can from them. If you want it, just don't show up for a couple weeks." I thanked him, and said I would consider it. CDR DuPont asked if I planned on divorcing Michelle. I told him that was very likely because I didn't see any path to reconciliation with her. CDR DuPont clearly disapproved and told me that he's limited his advice to me because I haven't asked for it. I told him that I have kept him more at a distance because he is the Commanding Officer and no longer just my friend, but that I welcomed any advice he wanted to provide. CDR DuPont reminded me about his views on the Catholic sacrament of marriage being irrevocable. I described annulments and what Fr. Baker, who I spoke to at CDR DuPont's recommendation, had said about undiagnosed mental illness being one of the reasons annulments are often granted. CDR DuPont reiterated that I "will always be married to Michelle" because of our son, Aiden. We finished our lunch and left. CDR DuPont was clearly bothered on a personal level by the course my life has taken.



M. J. Stettner

Enclosure (2)

ENCLOSURE (4)  
Enclosure (1)

19 April 2019

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Subj: CDR DUPONT ATTEMPTED TO TAKE A DOWN AIRCRAFT FLYING

1. On 18 April 2019, I was the adversary event Lead when aircraft 102 was reported as "down" by CDR Matt Pearce after two rejected takeoff attempts. These takeoff attempts were rejected because the anti-skid light illuminated both times shortly after brake release on takeoff. I proceeded with the rest of the adversary event without CDR Pearce. Upon landing and entry into Maintenance Control, I could see that something was clearly wrong on the faces of everyone in the room. Maintenance Control personnel informed me that CDR DuPont was taking aircraft 102 "as-is" with no troubleshooting or maintenance action performed after the initiation of the Z-coded (down) MAF for the anti-skid during my event. They informed me that CDR DuPont told them CAG had approved this flight, and, on the basis of that verbal relay and subsequent conversations with CDR DuPont, PAE changed the "down" MAF to an "up" MAF and released the aircraft as "safe for flight."

2. I asked the Maintenance Control personnel for a copy of the MESM and identified "Anti-Skid" as an item clearly required for all flights. With a couple hours until CDR DuPont's proposed takeoff, I finished my post-flight paperwork, went upstairs to the Ready Room to see similar looks on the faces of the pilots in the ready room. I collected the appropriate information to establish that it is not legal – or smart – to do what CDR DuPont was trying to do, and I tried to find the person who I thought he would most listen to, CDR Pearce. CDR Pearce and LCDR Jensen had already tried to talk CDR DuPont out of signing for the jet without functioning anti-skid; so, I went into his office and politely but firmly told him that, as the Maintenance Officer and an Aviation Safety Officer, this is in direct violation of the 4790 and the MESM and that CAG doesn't have the authority to waive either – especially for a routine flight like this. CDR DuPont curtly told me I was over-reacting, older F-5s didn't even have anti-skid installed, the MESM is a "fuck-book," and that we were done talking because he had little time before his flight.

3. I left his office, CDR DuPont signed for aircraft 102 and taxied to the hold-short. He did not take off. Before taxiing, CDR DuPont texted me to tell me he would start up, taxi, go to the hold short and wait. If no other aircraft went down, he'd return to the line. If one did go down, he'd go flying.

4. This was all in support of an FRS FWT-112 event. It was definitely not a critical event meeting any definition of operational necessity. Sound ORM was not applied by CDR DuPont at any point in this process, even when LCDR Jensen reminded CDR DuPont that the duty runway was the short one, and asked CDR DuPont, "does that change your thinking?" CDR DuPont tersely replied, "no." After CDR DuPont signed for the jet, I, as the Maintenance Officer, went to Mr. Robert Scott and told him that PAE had placed themselves in a very awkward position. I told him I expected him to write up a memo for the record describing the way this all happened and to send it to me. I told him that, without that memo describing the actions of the Commanding Officer, NAVAIR could come down very hard on PAE, and PAE might be left with little to defend itself. Mr. Scott sent me the statement on 19 August 2019.

5. On 19 August 2019, I called LCDR Heather Bliss from NAVAIR to ask for advice about how to legally take a "down" aircraft flying. She asked why I was asking. I explained the situation with CDR DuPont from the 18<sup>th</sup> of April 2019, and I asked her to keep our conversation confidential while I attempt to

Enclosure (2)

ENCLOSURE (5)

Enclosure (1)

handle this in-house. She agreed to hold our conversation in confidence. LCDR Bliss is very uncomfortable keeping such a blatant violation of instruction, ORM and flight safety combined with abuse of Command Authority quiet, but she agreed because I told her I am going to handle it. I asked the COR, LT Penn, to find out what the 4790 has to say about taking down aircraft flying.

6. By the 19<sup>th</sup> of August 2019, the ACOR, Chief Dees, had heard about CDR DuPont's decision to take an aircraft that was down. He is incredulous, both that CDR DuPont would even attempt it and that PAE would agree to it. I closed the door, and I listened to him while he laid out his concerns. His concerns are similar to those shared by the Ready Room. I assured Chief Dees that I shared his concerns, and I was handling the matter in the appropriate manner. LT Penn later showed me the section in the 4790 that CDR DuPont had violated:

*17.2.4 The CO or detachment OIC shall take direct action to ensure aircraft are properly classified as FMC, PMC, or NMC, ensuring NMC and out MCRS aircraft are not flown. PMC aircraft are not restricted from flying, if in the judgement of the CO or detachment OIC these aircraft are safely flyable for the assigned mission.*

*17.2.2.2 A MESM determines supply system project codes... the following project codes shall be assigned*

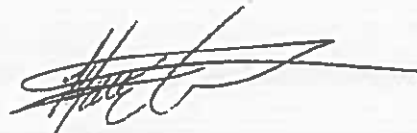
*a. A non-mission capable supply (NMCS) project code only if the lack of the required part makes the aircraft incapable of performing any of its missions (EOC alpha character Z). The aircraft is not safely flyable.*

*17.2.3.3 NMC. In MCRS, with one or more outstanding NMCS requisitions or NMCM maintenance actions. All NMC (NMCS, NMCM or both) discrepancies shall be marked down and have an EOC alpha character of Z assigned. The aircraft is not safely flyable and cannot perform any mission listed in the applicable MESM.*

*Note 1: NMC aircraft shall not be flown*

--- COMNAVAIRFORINST 4790.2C on page 17-15&16

7. This entire event was a willful violation of instruction, good sense and flight safety despite multiple attempts by well-meaning fellow pilots to change CDR DuPont's mind. CDR DuPont's actions have undermined the entire Safety culture of VFC-111 and PAE and placed both PAE and CAG in a very precarious position if this incident were to be brought to the attention of anyone outside the command.



M. J. Stettner

Enclosure (2)

ENCLOSURE (5)

Enclosure (1)

24 APRIL 2019

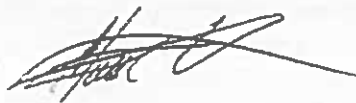
MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Subj: MID-TERM COUNSELING ON 22 APRIL 2019

1. On 22 April 2019, CDR DuPont performed my mid-term counseling. At the outset, CDR DuPont said in a very stand-off-ish way, "Well, you already know you're a terminal O4, so, what's on your mind." I responded by outlining my safety and maintenance concerns regarding what happened on 18 April 2019 when CDR DuPont attempted to take a down aircraft (102) flying and his subsequent unwillingness to take responsibility for that illegal action. I detailed the manner in which his actions undermined the command culture he and I had worked so hard to instill in our Contract Maintainers, PAE: if the jet is down, call it down, and we will accept the lost sortie or X. CDR DuPont responded by reminding me that "CAG approved the flight because it was me as the pilot" and trying to, again, explain his "mindset" for his actions without taking any responsibility for the inherently illegal and unsafe nature of his actions. CDR DuPont told me that "no maintenance professional told him he couldn't take the jet flying." I replied by saying, "I am the maintenance officer, and I told you that you couldn't take the jet flying." CDR DuPont reiterated, again, that it was inappropriate for me to "go running to NAVAIR" or contact entities outside the command for advice when faced with actions such as these. I explained that I went to LCDR Heather Bliss for discreet advice, and she agreed not to say anything to her superiors. I further stated that, if anyone else at NAVAIR got wind of what he did, I was 99% certain it wasn't from LCDR Bliss. I informed him that it was far more likely to be PAE going to NAVAIR because of the precarious position they found themselves in after releasing a down aircraft safe for flight.

2. With that part of the conversation over, I informed CDR DuPont that his use of the MPO is both inappropriate and very likely illegal. I explained that, at no time was there ever any danger of violence from any of the named parties, that the MPO is properly used as a "cooling off period" when the possibility of violence or abuse is suspected and that MPOs are typically written for, at most, 90 days to allow for the circumstances to be revisited. I asked him if he had implemented it correctly by notifying local law enforcement since the "protected" persons are civilians. He replied that he had not, and challenged me, "Do you WANT me to notify them?" I responded, "If that is the correct way to implement an MPO, then I don't have a problem with that." CDR DuPont asked if I was maintaining the spreadsheet I had shared with him detailing any contact I have with Sarah. I told him that I was, per his request. CDR DuPont reiterated (from previous conversations about the MPO) that the MPO wasn't meant to keep us from talking or interacting on a day-to-day basis, but that it existed to protect the Navy in the event "the press" took up the story, and the spreadsheet existed only so that he could have an answer if he was asked about our interactions by his superiors. CDR DuPont stated he had no intention of looking at the spreadsheet unless that happened. CDR DuPont asked me if our interactions and feelings were "philial." I asked for clarification, and he tried to explain the meaning of the word, but I don't recall the specific way he tried to explain it. I said we see each other when we drop our respective children off at school, and we are maintaining a platonic friendship. I requested that CDR DuPont remove the MPO because my son was born, and it is an illegal use of the order to de facto prevent me from seeing a child that is mine. CDR DuPont stated that there was a possibility he could revisit the terms of the MPO with CDR Lori Conlon in the near future. I said I would appreciate that, and I left his office.

3. At no time during this mid-term counseling was my ground job or performance as a Naval Aviator discussed.



M. J. Stettner

Enclosure (2)

ENCLOSURE (b)

Enclosure (1)

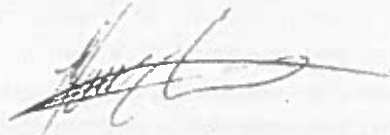
1 May 2019

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Subj: CDR DUPONT'S REQUEST FOR BIDS ON THE GOLF CARTS

1. On 1 May 2019, CDR DuPont came to my office and actively encouraged me to have the Summerland Key Cove Airport Company, for whom I serve as part-owner and Vice President, bid on the golf cart contract. I told him "having squadron members bid on the contract represents a massive conflict of interest, you know I've already seen the numbers from the other bids, and, even if I hadn't, the juice ain't worth the squeeze." I told CDR DuPont that I understood he had also encouraged LCDR Jump to bid on the contract, and that I had told LCDR Jump to avoid that, as well. CDR DuPont replied, "I just want to make sure we get folks we can trust in charge of these golf carts and not random people from Miami. I don't want to see this turn out like the Maintenance contract with PAE."

2. CDR DuPont is well aware that LCDR Jump was going to use his discount through TEXTRON who also has a contract with the Navy for contract adversary missions to acquire the golf carts in question. CDR DuPont also stated to the Ready Room a few days ago when LCDR Jump's proposal was being discussed in the Ready Room that he'd love to have LCDR Jump win the contract so that, if the golf carts don't work, he can just take LCDR Jump off the flight schedule whenever he comes into town until they are fixed.



M. J. Stettner

Enclosure (2)

ENCLOSURE (7)

Enclosure (1)

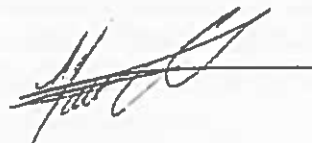


6 May 2019

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Subj: SAVANNAH CROSS COUNTRY RETURN

1. On 6 May 2019, it came to my attention during Ready Room discussion that an aircraft had flown back from Savannah with a Low Fuel light illuminated on takeoff. I spoke with the pilots of that flight, LCDR Norris and LCDR Reed. I also spoke with Mr. Robert Scott in PAE about how maintenance was involved in that decision. The pilots agreed that they intended to call the aircraft down until CDR DuPont, during a phone call to LCDR Reed while he was in his jet, turning, suggested they not be so hasty and to "make sure it was really down."
2. The pilots attempted to work with PAE Maintenance Control and some C-130 maintainers they met at the Savannah Airport in order to verify that there was fuel in the aircraft and assess the nature of the malfunction. Mr. Scott knew it was a faulty Warning Caution Panel, and he told me that he told CDR DuPont that the aircraft was down, and he'd send a rescue detachment on Monday. The next thing he heard, the aircraft was safe on deck on 5 May 2019.
3. Having gathered this information and verified with Mr. Scott that the Warning Caution Panel falls under "Instruments" in the MESM as a downing discrepancy if it is malfunctioning and, even if it were the correct diagnosis, a malfunctioning fuel low level probe falls under "fuel system" in the MESM and is also a downing discrepancy, I took this information to CDR Meritt to tell him we flew another "down" aircraft over the weekend, and that CDR DuPont was involved in this decision, as well. I informed him that this was becoming an uncomfortable and unsafe trend. CDR Meritt agreed, and we decided to add this event to the list I presented to him on 1 May 2019 to discuss during the HFC on 10 May 2019.



M. J. Stettner

Enclosure (2)

ENCLOSURE ( 8 )

Enclosure ( 1 )

7 May 2019

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

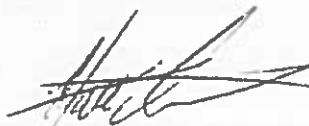
Subj: MEETING OUTSIDE THE PR SHOP IN REFERENCE TO THE SAVANNAH CROSS COUNTRY RETURN

1. CDR DuPont, on the way to his flight on 7 May 2019, pulled me aside to discuss the inquiries I, during the course of my duties as Maintenance Officer, made into the cross-country return flight of a "down" aircraft on 5 May 2019. CDR DuPont accused me of undermining good order and discipline in the command by "conducting my investigation to come after him" for his involvement in the decision to fly the "down" aircraft back to NAS Key West. CDR DuPont alluded to taking disciplinary action based on that belief. He told me I should have come to him first and asked him if I had a concern, like I should have on 18 April 2019 instead of "running to NAVAIR."

2. I explained that this incident was brought to my attention by members of the Ready Room, and I told CDR DuPont that I needed more information so that I could speak intelligently about what happened when I did come to him, as I was planning to do. I asked him why he did not include me, his Maintenance Officer, in the decision on whether or not to fly the malfunctioning aircraft back. He replied that the pilots were qualified to make the call, that they employed the help of C-130 maintainers they met at the airport in Savannah to help them diagnose the problem, that they consulted VFC-111 Maintenance Control and that it was well in hand. I relayed that the pilots had MADE the call before he intervened and suggested they look at ways to make sure it was "really down." I explained that, within seconds of hearing the symptoms, I knew what was wrong because I'd seen this exact malfunction multiple times before, and that the diagnosis the pilots, Maintenance Control and the C-130 mechanics came to was wholly incorrect.

3. I explained that I had confirmed my initial diagnosis - a malfunctioning Warning Caution panel due to moisture, and that the diagnosis of a malfunctioning fuel low level transducer was incorrect - with the Maintenance Manager, Mr. Robert Scott, on 6 May 2019. I further explained that pilots, with zero maintenance training, have no business attempting to diagnose aircraft malfunctions on deck that are listed in the MESM as a downing discrepancy. According to Mr. Scott, the Warning Caution Panel is included under "instruments" in the MESM and a faulty fuel low sensor is included under "fuel system." Both are NMC discrepancies according to the MESM. I told CDR DuPont that Mr. Scott told me on 6 May 2019 that he had relayed to CDR DuPont that the aircraft in question was down, the high probability of a malfunctioning Warning Caution Panel being the problem and that Mr. Scott was happy to send a rescue detachment to replace the panel on Monday. CDR DuPont did not confirm that or deny that Mr. Scott had told him this.

4. CDR DuPont again attempted to tell me that pilots have millions of dollars of training and should be able to make a call like this. I explained that this situation illustrates why that notion is completely false and dangerous: the pilots had no idea what they were doing, misdiagnosed the problem and took a down jet flying with a problem they didn't understand in direct violation of the MESM. I further explained that there was a pattern of bad decision-making at 1G developing here, and I suggested that we should probably go to his office to talk about it rather than the hallway. We went upstairs, but CDR DuPont went into the Ready Room (and I followed, hoping we would continue to his office). That was the end of the discussion.



M. J. Stettner

Enclosure (2)

ENCLOSURE (9)

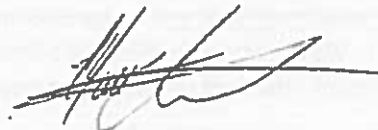
Enclosure (1)

23 May 2019

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Subj: EMAIL SARAH SENT TO MICHELLE

1. On 22 May 2019, Michelle received a pretty awful e-mail from Sarah implying that we had seen each other in a manner that violated the MPO established by CDR DuPont on 26 November of the previous year. Michelle texted me a copy of the e-mail, and I agreed that the e-mail was needlessly hurtful and way out of line. Shortly after receiving the e-mail from Michelle, I texted CDR DuPont and told him, in accordance with my understanding of how he wanted the MPO to work, that we needed to chat about something important that came up in my personal life that didn't belong on the Google Sheets spreadsheet I maintained for him. Please see texts between myself and CDR DuPont for the exact content of that exchange.
2. Michelle, clearly distraught, confided in her new friend, Ms. Carolina DuPont (who had only really shown any interest in Michelle after Sarah became pregnant with Caleb and our marital troubles found the limelight) and showed her the e-mail. Rather than provide the support appropriate for a friend, Ms. DuPont asked Michelle to provide her with evidence proving who sent the e-mail and when it was sent. Ms. DuPont then sent that e-mail and whatever proof Michelle provided at the request of a friend to CDR DuPont.
3. On the basis of a quest for evidence performed by his wife, CDR DuPont demanded an explanation. I provided one, and I sent him the apology and explanation text Sarah sent to Michelle that morning. CDR DuPont said he was going to initiate a second Preliminary Inquiry into my personal life to see if I violated the MPO. CDR DuPont alluded to his wife going to "the Press" as a reason that this couldn't be "brushed under the rug." I told him there was nothing to brush under the rug, and I explained the situation. CDR DuPont told me that he cannot have his officers disobeying lawful orders and maintain good order and discipline. I replied, "while I have complied with the MPO out of respect for you and to support the good order and discipline of the command, I am confident, based on my reading of the law and conversations with the Defense JAGs in Jacksonville, that the MPO you issued is not a lawful order, and, if anything is going to undermine good order and discipline in this command, it will be a Commanding Officer abusing his authority to issue such an illegal MPO and then taking legal action based on wives confiding in his wife for support through a difficult time." I told him that, while I'd rather not go through another investigation, if he needed to do another official investigation to be satisfied, I'm happy to cooperate. I left his office while he was trying to figure out who to assign as the Investigating Officer.



M. J. Stettner

Enclosure (2)

ENCLOSURE (10)

Enclosure ( )

31 May 2019

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Subj: DISCUSSION IN MAINTENANCE OFFICE REGARDING RESULTS OF THE CSA SURVEY

1. On 31 May 2019, CDR DuPont approached me in my office before his afternoon flight. He seemed very agitated and despondent; he closed the door and sat down to talk. He told me that he had just begun reading the results of the CSA survey, and they had made him feel like "someone had just killed his dog." I listened while he described the nature of some of the results being outright disrespectful, rude and not at all constructive. He then said that a lot of the comments seemed to surround his decision to take the jet without functioning anti-skid flying on 18 April 2019. He said that he knew that issue was important to me, and he felt a lot of the negative comments were made by me. I told him that I did include that concern in my response to the CSA survey, but I was not at all rude about it. He then brought up the Savannah cross country incident and said he thought LCDR Jensen was the other pilot who would have brought this stuff up. I told him that I had included that incident in my response, too, but that I don't know what anyone else said. I told him that, in order to ensure I wasn't being rude, disrespectful or even snarky, I had another pilot in the command read over my responses because my goal was to be constructive and help the command. I offered to tell him all the things I could remember writing:

- the mishandling of classified information and his failure to pro-actively go to LT Rademacher, thereby, requiring a Lieutenant to approach the Commanding Officer over the Commanding Officer's failure to self-report.
- He coarsely brushed off LCDR Harding's gentle mention of the same situation off right after the brief.
- That he violates the SOP to get a couple touch-and-goes in while armed with a CATM or TCTS pod.
- That he had attempted to take the down jet flying in defiance of the MESM and the 4790 and CAG doesn't have the authority to waive either.
- That he still did not understand why pilots should not be finding ways to violate the MESM and led them down the wrong path in Savannah instead of backing their initial decision to call the jet down.
- That he had abused his authority in issuing an unlawful military protective order and then failed to implement it properly
- That he had taken no steps to secure the confidentiality of personal problems facing his Officers
- That he talks in circles and no one who speaks with him has any idea what happened during the conversation or what his actual intent is.

2. CDR DuPont listened and again attempted to explain his "mindset" for the incidents that violated the MESM, stated again that no maintenance professional had told him he couldn't take the jet, denied doing touch-and-goes with CATMs (saying, instead, that he always did "low approaches") and he denied making LT Rademacher chase him down. I told him "I physically watched your wheels touch the deck when I came to you about the SOP during the debrief of a flight we had early in your command tour, and I trust the other pilots who have seen you do the same since then." I firmly maintained that violating the MESM and the 4790 for an FRS event, regardless of whether CAG approved it or not, is illegal, puts

Enclosure (2)

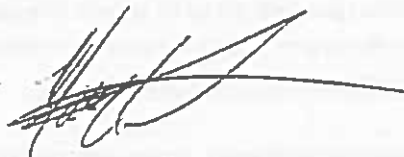
ENCLOSURE (11)

Enclosure (1)

CAG and PAE in an awkward and legally-compromising spot and undermines the entire Safety culture of the command – which is exactly what the survey was about. I reminded him that I, his Maintenance Officer – likely the most maintenance qualified flight-suit Maintenance Officer in all of TSW – told him that he couldn't take the jet and the reasons why. I explained that LT Rademacher personally came to me and said "I had hoped Skipper would come to me about the copier, but it's been a week." I relayed to CDR DuPont that I replied to LT Rademacher, "it is your job to have the hard conversation with Skipper. Go to him if he won't come to you. If you want, I'll go with you since I was in that flight, and I know it happened." CDR DuPont was surprised that his intent was so often misconstrued and that I thought he talked in circles. I referred him to our conversations regarding the MPO. I told him, "to this day, I still have no idea what your intent is with that damn thing or what I'm supposed to do or not do because you've contradicted yourself so many times, so, Sarah rarely even talks to me anymore because it's too risky."

3. CDR DuPont then talked about the other people who shared my concerns and seemed to be asking me to help him figure out who wrote negative comments. "It's really only you and FJ, I think, that wrote negative things. It's kinda chickenshit to only say stuff on an anonymous survey. You know, some of the comments said I had been too lenient on you in allowing you to fix your house and other stuff." I replied, "before I filled out the CSA, I asked Gotta who sees this survey. He told me this survey doesn't go anywhere except to you. I don't know who else wrote stuff, nor do I know what was written. That's the point of an anonymous survey that goes only to the Skipper. There is nothing I wrote in that survey that I haven't already said to your face."

4. CDR DuPont then had to walk on his flight, and he stood up to go. I said, "Before you go, Skipper, please keep in mind that, one of the reasons we are all so concerned about these issues is your follow-on assignment; if you behave this way as an instructor in Meridian, you're going to get a student killed." CDR DuPont assured me he would "wear a different hat" when being an instructor in Meridian, and that he just didn't know how to fix it with our squadron. I suggested: "unlike the last AOM where you did not take any responsibility for violating the MESM and 4790 and simply described your "mindset" before basically telling the squadron we weren't going to talk about it anymore, it will go a long way toward healing this command if you stand up in front of the Ready Room and unequivocally own these mistakes. That one thing will do more good than anything else." CDR DuPont said he'd consider it and left my office.



M. J. Stettner

Enclosure (2)

ENCLOSURE (11)

Enclosure (1)